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The 23 October Beirut Bombing:
Was There An Intelligence Failure?

During the weeks and months prior to the bombing, the intelligence community repeatedly warned of possible terrorist attacks against US personnel and installations in Beirut, particularly against the Marine contingent. These warnings [redacted] suggested that radical Shias were targeting the Marines for terrorist attacks. More than 20 such warnings appeared in intelligence publications between June and October, including:

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[redacted]

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-- Two days before the bombing, the intelligence community monthly warning memorandum stated that "the Marines will remain an easy target for any group that wants to halt the peace process."

-- On 24 September, [redacted] "attacks on MNF personnel and installations are likely to increase as various Muslim militias perceive the US military role as one of support for the Gemayel government." [redacted]

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None of the reporting, however, cited a specific time, vehicle, or method of attack that would be employed. Although the intelligence community could predict an impending attack in general terms, details of exactly when or how the attack would take place were not available. [redacted]

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[redacted]

We believe that Muslim extremists, supported by Iran and possibly by Syria, continue to target US military and diplomatic personnel in Beirut for terrorist violence. [redacted]

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[redacted] radical Shias and Palestinians are planning a wide range of possible attacks, including more car bombings. [redacted]

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These groups, encouraged by the success of the October bombing, believe that repeated attacks will force the MNF contingents to leave Lebanon. [redacted]

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**SUBJECT: The 23 October Beirut Bombing
Was There an Intelligence Failure?**

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